

Training and Developing Leaders in a Transforming Army



Lieutenant General William M. Steele, US Army and
Lieutenant Colonel Robert P. Walters Jr., US Army

Without close examination and monitoring, Army culture may evolve in a direction that is both unwanted and counterproductive to developing future leaders. By implementing some or all of the ATLDP recommendations, the Army can take charge of its culture and create a warfighter environment for routinely training soldiers and growing leaders.

"Go Army, Beat Navy!"

"My Other Car is a Porsche"

"If You Can Read This, You Are Following Too Close"

"Airline Pilots on Strike"

"My Kid is an Honor Roll Student at Patton Junior High"

"I Brake for Animals"

YOU SEE THEM EVERYDAY. People plaster their car bumpers with stickers. They hang logo flags on their porches. They walk in picket lines holding signs. They confront police barricades shouting protest slogans. And they skillfully use the 15-second sound bite on "CNN." What are they doing? The answer is simple; they are sending messages. Their messages reflect their beliefs.

In the Army, our actions also speak to our beliefs.

In fact, they speak volumes. Our actions, policies and practices let our soldiers, civilians and family members know what the Army values. It does not matter if we *believe* in locking in our training six weeks out if our *practice* is to routinely change the training schedule at the last minute. Our soldiers will not believe us if we do not practice what we say. We tell cadets and officer candidates they will lead soldiers when they join the Army, and they believe us. When we move platoon leaders out of their leadership positions quickly into staff jobs, our practice sends a different message. When our practice is not consistent with soldier beliefs, what message are we sending?

We are transforming to a more strategically responsive force that is dominant at every point on the operational spectrum. The Army Vision guiding this transformation has three component parts: Readiness, Transformation and People. As we started down this Transformation path, we began by ad-

dressings doctrine, organizational structure and materiel with the Transformation Campaign Plan. In June 2000, the Chief of Staff, United States Army, (CSA) chartered the Army Training and Leader Development Panel (ATLDP) to look specifically at training and leader development as part of the Army's Transformation Campaign Plan. For three months, the panel conducted exhaustive research and collected data across the Army. Over the subsequent three months, the panel assessed Army training and leader development to determine their suitability for the future. The panel's commissioned officer study was released 25 May 2001. This article continues my previous discussion, "Training and Developing Army Leaders," in the July-August issue of *Military Review*. Here, I will describe the panel's work on Army culture and discuss the major findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the Officer Education System (OES), Army training, the systems approach to training (SAT) and the requirement to link training and leader development.

Merriam-Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary* defines culture as "the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes a company or corporation." While we are not a corporation, our organization, the United States Army, does have its own unique culture. We have a common set of values and goals described as missions, and we have practices that we accept as routine. Soldiers understand that life within the Army culture is not a utopian existence. They recognize that a commitment to duty, honor and country requires personal sacrifice that ebbs and flows with the operational pace of the unit. The pace increases in times of crisis and should decrease during routine peacetime operations. There exists an acceptable level of sacrifice that soldiers and their families accept as part of our professional culture. We will call that level the "acceptable band of tolerance." The ATLDP discovered several beliefs with contradictory practices. The more important ones follow.

Our Practices Contradict Our Beliefs

Our beliefs make Army culture unique, but they compete with negative practices. Officers surveyed by the ATLDP voiced a common theme—an excessive operational pace pervades nearly all aspects of their personal and professional lives. Their commitment and service ethic conflict with their commitment to their families. Officers perceive that the Army is not as committed to them and their fami-

Officers surveyed by the ATLDP voiced a common theme—an excessive operational pace pervades nearly all aspects of their personal and professional lives. Their commitment and service ethic conflict with their commitment to their families. Officers perceive that the Army is not as committed to them and their families as the Army expects them to be committed in return.

lies as the Army expects them to be committed in return. Trust, an essential component of an effective military organization, suffers from lack of senior to subordinate contacts and from perceptions of inequity in the Officer Evaluation Report (OER) system. The warrior ethos for lieutenants diminishes when confronted by an often too-brief experience as a platoon leader or other small-unit leader to fill staff positions left vacant by our shortage of captains. There is a frequent inability to conduct training in accordance with the Army's training doctrine due to resource constraints and the undisciplined application of our training doctrine. Junior officers find themselves performing jobs for which they are not prepared. In turn, senior leaders oversupervise and micromanage. Finally, the overall personnel management system appears to focus not on leader development in organizational assignments but rather on placing "faces in spaces."

Belief: Doctrine is sound.

Practice: We do not follow the doctrine.

The officer study found that we no longer follow or cannot follow our training management doctrine. We do too many nonmission tasks; make last-minute changes and direct too many top-down prescriptive training events. The study noted that commanders do not enforce the contractual aspects of locking in short and near-term training events. When this happens, predictability for units, soldiers and families is the victim. Scheduled training is overcome by last-minute nonmission events. When units attempt to conduct too many events in a given period, training suffers and units seldom retrain to

To prepare for asymmetric threats, and noncontiguous and nonlinear battlefields in our present operating environment, all Army leaders must be warfighters. Officers must be competent in conducting small-unit operations and bonded to the Army before, and as a higher priority than, their branch.

standard on assessed deficiencies because they are racing to the next event.

Quarterly training briefings (QTBs) no longer follow their intended format. Rather than an opportunity for senior and subordinate commanders to schedule and resource future training, maintain priorities, achieve unity of effort and synchronize actions, today's QTBs have morphed into all-encompassing unit status reports. This emphasis on process (researching data, providing input and preparing briefing slides) consumes an inordinate amount of staff and commander time and detracts from the intended purpose of QTBs.

The panel recommended several policy changes for Army Regulation 350-1, *Army Training*, and the CSA's training guidance to increase predictability and reduce operational pace. It also recommended that the Army and units discipline the training management process by locking in training schedules as described in doctrine to increase predictability, eliminate nonmission-related compliance training, protect weekends from routine Active Component garrison training and staff activities, and commit to quality family time by scheduling four-day weekends in conjunction with national holidays. Finally, the panel recommended a Department of the Army (DA) policy that vests in one staff agency the publication of taskers to subordinate commands.

Belief: Commanders build cohesive teams.

Practice: OER stifles unit teambuilding and inhibits trust.

The OER is a source of mistrust and anxiety. It has two fundamental purposes: to provide for leader development and to manage personnel. The OER does not yet meet officer expectations as a leader development tool. The leader development aspects of the OER are seldom used, and senior raters sel-

dom counsel subordinates. The current OER does provide selection boards what they need to sort through a high-quality officer population and select those with the greatest potential. Despite recent high promotion rates—98 percent to captain and 92 percent to major—and three years' experience with the current OER, there remains considerable anxiety over the evaluation system.

Who wants to be labeled a "center of mass" (COM) officer? The OER's forced distribution formula requires at least 51 percent of the officer corps to be COM. Field feedback indicates officers are concerned about the impact of a COM rating on career progression. Officers believe the forced distribution system causes senior raters to pool officers and rate by position. They consider the term "center of mass" as negative and believe a COM OER in a branch-qualifying position is career-ending. A comment from the General Officer Army Training and Leader Development Conference at Fort Hood, Texas, on the term "center of mass": "Center of mass is an adequate description of the aiming point for a weapon's sight picture, but not to describe the abilities and potential of our leaders."

Belief: Leader development is essential.

Practice: Platoon leader longevity is determined by time vice the quality of the developmental experience.

How can a brigade commander build a cohesive team of leaders if he or she has to senior rate more than half of the unit's captains as COM? Many officers do not believe that the senior rating accurately reflects actual job performance or future potential. They see the top block as being reserved for purposes outside the stated OER construct. Perceived manipulations of the system include reserving above centers of mass (ACOMs) for company commanders at the expense of staff officers, automatic COMs on initial OERs so that subsequent reports show improvement and ACOMs on OERs issued just before selection boards meet. In short, in its current form and application, the OER counters team-building; promotes competition among unit officers; and inhibits bonding, trust, cohesion and loyalty at the battalion and brigade levels.

The panel recommended that the Army review the OER this year to examine its leader development aspects, the terms ACOM and COM, counseling

A 4th Infantry Division soldier returns to his family from a Persian Gulf deployment.



Soldiers understand that life in the Army is not a utopian existence. They recognize that a commitment to duty, honor and country requires personal sacrifice. Our soldiers also believe that the level of sacrifice will ebb and flow with the operational pace, increasing in times of crisis and decreasing afterwards. The panel called the level of sacrifice that soldiers and their families can endure indefinitely the “acceptable band of tolerance.”

and forced distribution requirements. To get a balanced look at the system, it is important to involve the field in the OER review. Brigade and battalion commanders need an effective evaluation/assessment tool that reinforces trust, cohesion, team-building and loyalty at unit level; the current OER fails this test.

Junior officers' initial experiences must be protected by ensuring adequate time in jobs with associated criteria-based, quality job experiences. To mitigate the tendency to use lieutenants to fill officer personnel gaps around post, general officer approval should be required to assign lieutenants above brigade. When lieutenants are moved out of branch jobs, we must provide the appropriate training required for their success.

Belief: OES will prepare officers for the future.

Practice: OES is focused on the last war.

Officer Education System

Many of the institutional tools that served the Army well during the Cold War are no longer adequate. Largely untouched since the collapse of the Soviet Union and progressively underresourced during Army downsizing, the OES is out of synch with Army needs today and the needs of the Objective Force tomorrow. We must adapt OES curricula to prepare for a new operating environment characterized by regional threats, full spectrum operations and information-age technology. To prepare for asymmetric threats, and noncontiguous and inear

The panel found that the SAT process is fundamentally sound but not executed well. Due to a lack of training development resources, the Army does not have up-to-date training and educational products, the foundation for standards-based training and leader development. How can soldiers train to standard if the Army standard is outdated or has not been defined?

nonlinear battlefields in our present operating environment, all Army leaders must be warfighters. Officers must be competent in conducting small-unit operations and bonded to the Army before, and as a higher priority than, their branch. They must be cohesive as year groups and as officer cohorts, self-aware and adaptive, and committed to lifelong learning. Adapting the OES requires a new approach that focuses each school on a central task and purpose, links schools horizontally and vertically in the educational process, synchronizes the educational and operational experiences of officers, and educates officers to established common standards.

At Fort Benning, Georgia, the US Army Infantry School has conducted the first two of four pilot courses of a common Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC). Phase I takes newly commissioned second lieutenants from all branches and trains them on what is expected of Army commissioned officer leaders in, what amounts to, a leadership laboratory. During the course, the lieutenants are immersed in hands-on leadership training built around small-unit leadership skills required by all officers on full spectrum battlefields. In addition to weapons qualification, physical training and confidence-building exercises, the common core focuses on the development of basic leadership skills in a field environment. Upon completion of BOLC, Phase I, the officers attend their branch basic officer course to receive the necessary branch-specific technical training. The intent of this common BOLC is to produce officers, regardless of commissioning source or branch, who are self-aware, adaptable and prepared to meet the challenges of leading our soldiers in full spectrum operations. During BOLC, Phase I, officers establish bonds to their year group cohort that

transcends branch parochial biases. Although this BOLC is just one step toward transforming OES to meet the demands of the new operational environment, initial feedback indicates that the Army is on the right track.

A new Captains Career Course (CCC) should provide combined arms training to all captains. This course will focus on establishing a common Army standard for fighting, leading and training combined arms units. The CCC instructors will teach company combined arms skills, reinforce officership and prepare officers to be battalion and brigade combined arms battle captains. The end product of the new CCC will be captains ready to be combined arms company commanders or battle captains who can plan, prepare, execute and assess operations and training at the company, battalion and brigade levels.

Belief: Right officer, right education, right time.

Practice: 50 percent of our officers do not get resident schooling.

All majors need a resident intermediate-level education (ILE) based on the Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS) XXI. We should eliminate selection to the Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC) as a discriminator. The panel recommended eliminating the CGSOC selection board starting with Academic Year 2003-2004. The Army is planning and preparing to execute an ILE program to replace the current CGSOC. The goal is simple—provide *all majors* with a quality resident ILE based on OPMS XXI. This ILE will give all majors a common core of Army operational instruction of approximately three months. Career field, branch or functional area education will follow common core instruction and be tailored to prepare officers for future service in the Army. Lengths and locations will vary depending on the educational requirements of their career fields and/or functional area designations. This ILE program will end our current practice of using educational opportunities as a discriminator for branch qualification, promotion and command selection. The product the Army receives with ILE is a cohort of majors with a common knowledge of division, corps and joint operations who better understand their career fields. ILE graduates will have the technical, tactical and leadership skills required to be successful in their career fields, branches and/or functional areas.

A soldier from the 755th Military Police Company provides security during a weapons search in the village of Crnilo, Kosovo.



Adapting the OES requires a new approach that focuses each school on a central task and purpose, links schools horizontally and vertically in the educational process, synchronizes the educational and operational experiences of officers, and educates officers to established common standards.

Belief: Bottom-up approach is best.

Practice: Training is driven from the top.

Training

During the Armywide study, the field reported that although we are training hard, we are not training to doctrinal standard for a myriad of reasons. Nonmission taskings, an excessive operational pace and a shortage of training resources make it harder to execute home station training in accordance with Army training doctrine. Beyond the day-to-day consequences of missed training opportunities, there is a long-term impact on leader development when junior officers become our future battalion and bri-

gade commanders. Many will not know or understand what right looks like and may not fully understand the principles of planning, preparing, executing and assessing training and retraining to standard. The principles and processes of current training doctrine are sound, but the Army must adapt them to the operational environment for table of organization and equipment (TOE) and table of distribution and allowances units. A rewrite of Field Manual (FM) 7-0 (25-100), *Training the Force*, and FM 7-10 (25-101), *Battle Focused Training*, is needed. Training aids, devices, simulators and simulations (TADSS) are outdated and do not adequately model Army system behaviors and characteristics. Many units reported having weapons and command and control systems with no associated TADSS.

[The OER] has two fundamental purposes: to provide for leader development and to manage personnel. The OER does not yet meet officer expectations as a leader development tool. The leader development aspects of the OER are seldom used, and senior raters seldom counsel subordinates.

A bright spot in training is the operational and leader development experience the combat training centers (CTCs) provide to soldiers, leaders and units. The panel found that the Army must sustain the CTCs through robust recapitalization and modernization. In the late 1990s, we deferred CTC recapitalization and modernization requirements. CTC recapitalization sustains near-term readiness requirements for worn-out instrumentation, aging opposing force (OPFOR) vehicles, lack of aviation tactical engagement systems and interim fixes at CTCs until objective systems are fielded. CTC modernization provides for future requirements for TADSS, OPFOR and objective instrumentation—moving CTCs to commonality, digitization and an operational environment that enables Army Transformation. In 2000, the Army forecast funding for only 6 percent of the CTC recapitalization and modernization requirement. Today, we are forecasting funding through Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 at 70 percent of the CTC recapitalization and modernization requirement—more than \$780 million. The intent is to sustain these training centers as the crown jewels of the Army training program.

With the Army keeping the bar high at the CTCs, home station resourcing must improve to get the most out of the coveted CTC training and leader development experience. One example would be a portable CTC-like instrumentation package that commanders could use to train soldiers at home station. We are moving in that direction with Portable Range Instrumentation Systems to aid with training assessments and fixed tactical Internets to provide communications support that will drive the Army Battle Command System and its associated components. These automated systems will assist commanders conducting combined arms training locally by reducing support requirements.

Belief: Train to standard.

Practice: Standards do not exist.

Systems Approach to Training

The panel found that the SAT process is fundamentally sound but not executed well. Due to a lack of training development resources, the Army does not have up-to-date training and educational products, the foundation for standards-based training and leader development. How can soldiers train to standard if the Army standard is outdated or has not been defined?

Standards are the basis for developing training, assessing performance and providing feedback. Without common standards, soldier, leader and unit readiness—and battlefield success—are in doubt. These common standards must be documented, accessible and digital. We need to reinforce the importance of standards-based training and enforce the SAT process. In the US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), we should redesign the SAT development and support structure to leverage the subject matter expertise in the CTCs for training and doctrine development. The intent is not to put additional requirements on the observer/controllers and operations groups but to reallocate some training developers and doctrine writers and place them under operational control of the CTC operations group to capture training lessons learned and produce timely training products. Additionally, we need to invest in and exploit network technology to develop a more streamlined and effective SAT process where training and doctrine publications are web-based and updated. Up-to-date training and educational products are the foundation for standards-based training and leader development. Currently, we only have on hand 10 percent of the mission training plans (MTPs) required to support unit training. Of this 10 percent, most are obsolete.

Soldier training publications (STPs) are similarly obsolete or outdated. There are 273 of these publications addressing military occupational specialties at the -10, -20, -30 and -40 skill levels. Seventy

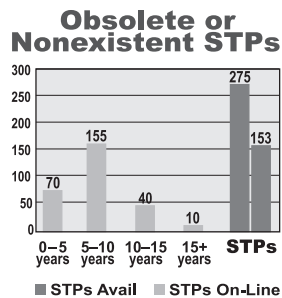


Figure 1.

STPs are less than five years old, 155 STPs are five to 10 years old, 40 STPs are 10 to 15 years old, and 10 STPs are more than 15 years old. These publications are not specifically designed to support Army of Excellence, Limited Conversion Division, Force XXI or Initial Brigade Combat Team forces and generally do not reflect digital skill requirements and training.

Reenergizing SAT will directly support the Army requirement for all battalions to receive an external evaluation (EXEVAL) annually. The goal is to start EXEVALs in FY 01 and to execute them for every TOE battalion annually thereafter. To meet this requirement, TRADOC reviewed the status of MTPs, the documents that provide the battalion-specific training standards. As of April 2001, there were 361 MTPs identified for review or revision; 86 are complete and the remainder are under revision. TRADOC's priority for MTP development is to immediately revise or develop, as appropriate, all divisional battalion and supporting/support unit MTPs this FY, then publish MTPs for nondivisional battalions by FY 02. This is a challenging plan, but rejuvenating the SAT process is clearly worth the time and effort.

Belief: Training and leader development are inextricably linked.

Practice: They are under separate DA staff proponencies.

Training and Leader Development

In the Army, we train soldiers, and we grow leaders. To excel at these two fundamentally necessary processes, we must look at them as one. Currently, the Army has a disjointed approach to training and leader development. The panel's work provides compelling evidence that a main effort in Army Transformation should be to link training and leader

Our leaders must commit to lifelong learning through a balance of educational and operational experiences, complemented by self-development, to fill knowledge gaps educational and operational experiences do not provide. . . The panel recommends that the Army provide the training and educational standards and products that are the foundation for standards-based training and leader development.

development. Linking these two imperatives commits the Army to training soldiers and growing them into leaders.

The panel recommended that the Army establish a single proponent for training and leader development to improve the link between training and leader development, policy and resourcing. Currently, the proponent for training and leader development is vested in separate staff elements at DA level. The Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans is responsible for matters relating to training, and the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel is responsible for matters relating to leader development. The lack of a single proponent for training and leader development results in unsynchronized policy and resourcing of these two key imperatives. There is no funding line for leader development in the Program Objective Memorandum, and leader development currently tends to compete poorly for funding against training priorities. If training and leader development are to be fully linked, the responsibility for both should rest with a single proponent on the DA staff.

Obsolete or Nonexistent MTPs

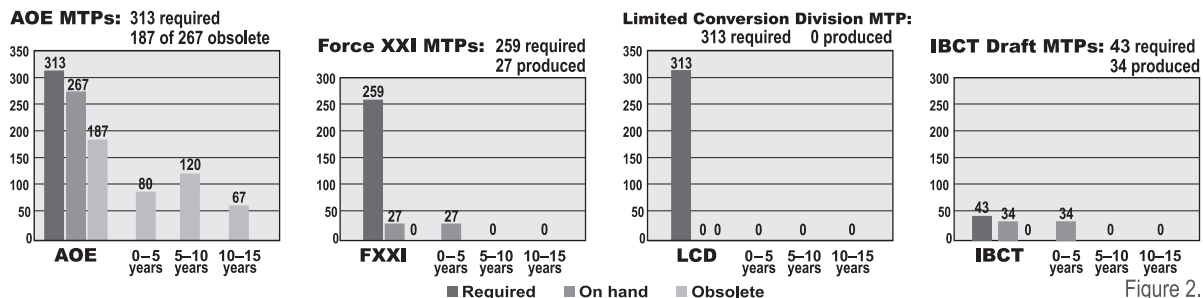


Figure 2.



The proposed model is a balanced, integrated, progressive training and leader development model that assures full spectrum capability. The model shows the components of a combined Army training and leader development program, the process and the products that link training and leader development into a single entity.

We need a training and leader development model that clearly communicates the Army leadership's intent and is understandable for junior leaders, staffs and outside agencies. The proposed model is a balanced, integrated, progressive training and leader development model that assures full spectrum capability. The model shows the components of a combined Army training and leader development program, the process and the products that link training and leader development into a single entity. The components of the model are linked and intrarelated. Army culture, our beliefs and practices, is the foundation block on which this model builds. At its core are values, service ethic, warrior ethos and commitment to lifelong learning. Standards build on the culture foundation and illustrate the importance of setting a bar that our soldiers, leaders and units must achieve. Standards provide the mechanism for the

next portion of the model, feedback. It is required for commanders to assess training and retrain and develop to standard. Feedback is required for our leaders, units and the Army as an institution. The top portion of the model represents the balance between operational and educational experiences needed to train soldiers and grow our own leaders. The model requires action by our soldiers, leaders and units to self-develop, educate and train. The result is leaders who are self-aware and adaptable. It also emphasizes the enduring principles of both training and leader development.

Our Army must be a learning organization. Our leaders must commit to lifelong learning through a balance of educational and operational experiences, complemented by self-development, to fill knowledge gaps educational and operational experiences do not provide. To be a learning organization that supports this lifelong learning, the panel recommends that the Army provide the training and educational standards and products that are the foundation for standards-based training and leader development. Needed are the doctrine, tools and support to foster lifelong learning. We must develop, fund and maintain an Armywide Warrior Development Center using information technology where soldiers, leaders and units go to find standards, training and education publications, doctrinal manuals, assessment and feedback tools and access distance and distributed learning programs for self-development.

We have to teach the importance of lifelong learning and the enduring competencies of self-awareness and adaptability throughout OES and strengthen this approach through organizations and self-development. In this context, self-awareness is the ability to assess abilities, determine strengths and weaknesses in an operational environment, and learn how to sustain strengths and correct weaknesses. Adaptability is the ability to recognize changes to the environment, determine what is new and what must be learned to be effective, and includes the learning process that follows that determination—all performed to standard and with feedback. The competencies of self-awareness and adaptability are all about lifelong learning. Their mastery leads to success in using many of the other skills required in full spectrum operations.

With this article and its predecessor, I have described the ATLDP and its conclusions from the commissioned officer study. The results from the panel's work confirm that leaders and soldiers must be at the center of our Army's Transformation process. For this to happen, we must take charge of our Army culture—set our own path vice yielding to external pressures. Additionally, we need to commit to training and growing our leaders by allocating the necessary resources to the OES, Army training and SAT. This commitment, along with inextricably linking training and leader development and arming our leadership with a management process to track and assess progress, will better align our beliefs and practices.

Nonmission taskings, an excessive operational pace and a shortage of training resources make it harder to execute home station training in accordance with Army training doctrine. Beyond the day-to-day consequences of missed training opportunities, there is a long-term impact on leader development when junior officers become our future battalion and brigade commanders.

To move ahead with our Transformation process, we must be willing to challenge everything from doctrine; to OERs; to OPMS XXI; to unit status reporting; to the way the Army designs forces, assigns operational missions and allocates resources. We must send the right message by balancing our practices with our beliefs. The ATLDP Commissioned Officer Study was just one component of our Army's transformation. The panel's findings, conclusions and 84 recommendations provided the CSA with credible information to improve our training and leader development programs and to balance our beliefs with our practices. Acting on these recommendations, along with the other ongoing Transformation efforts, will require extensive work. The good news is that our Army leaders are equal to the task. **MR**

Lieutenant General William M. Steele is the study director for the Army Training and Leader Development Panel. He is the Commanding General, US Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. His career includes six tours (more than 12 years) in the US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), during which he addressed training and leader development issues. He has commanded at every level from company through division and Army major command. His command and staff positions include commanding general, US Army Pacific, Fort Shafter, Hawaii; director for operations, J3, US Atlantic Command, Norfolk, Virginia; commanding general, 82d Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina; deputy commandant, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth; assistant division commander, 8th Infantry Division (Mechanized), US Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany; assistant commandant, US Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia; executive officer to the commanding general, TRADOC, Fort Monroe, Virginia; commander, 1st Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, Fort Bragg; and commander, 2d Battalion (Airborne), 504th Infantry, 82d Airborne Division. His article "Training and Developing Army Leaders" was published in the July-August 2001 Military Review.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert P. Walters Jr. is aide-de-camp for the Commanding General, Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth. He received a B.A. from the University of Maryland, an M.P.A. from Golden Gate University and an M.A. from Webster University. He is a graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College. He has served in various command and staff positions in the United States, Korea, Persian Gulf, Haiti and Bosnia.